

Application No.: 10/679,114

Docket No.: 65783-0032

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Office action mailed May 18, 2005. Applicants thank Examiner Palmer for the detailed review of the pending claims.

Claims 1-37 were pending. Claims 38-42 have been added herein. Accordingly, claims 1-42 are now pending. Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 6-7, 9, 11, 14, 21, 22-23 and 27-31 would be allowable if rewritten as independent claims (including the limitations of intervening claims). The Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 8, 10, 12-13, 15-20, 22, 24-26, and 32-37 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,390,687 B1 to Shirakawa. In response thereto, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 10, 16 and 26. Applicants submit that all of the pending claims, as amended, are allowable over the cited prior art.

A. Claims 1-15

Independent claims 1 and 10 were rejected under §102 in light of Shirakawa. Claim 1 is directed to a device for coupling a ferrule of a fiber optic cable to a fiber optic transceiver device, the device having a connector body and a guide member. Claim 10 is directed to a method of positioning a ferrule that involves a connector body and guide member. Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 10 to more clearly define the connector body and the relationship of the guide member thereto. For example, in claim 1, as amended, the connector body has "a plurality of sides and two generally opposing ends, said plurality of sides and two ends together generally defining a cavity therebetween, and wherein said two ends both have at least one opening each that are configured to allow a ferrule and/or a fiber optic cable to pass therethrough," and one of the plurality of sides "has an opening that is configured to receive said guide member therethrough into said cavity..." Claim 10, as amended, includes the step of "inserting said guide member through an opening in a side of a connector body and into an interior cavity of said connector body, said side being substantially parallel to an axis of said elongated channel when said guide member is in said cavity." Applicants submit that Shirakawa does not disclose the claimed features and relationship of the connector body and the guide member.

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Shirakawa discloses an optical connector having an optical housing 141 and an adapter 32. The Examiner has identified the optical housing 141 of Shirakawa as the recited connector body and the adapter 32 as the recited guide member. In contrast to the recitations of claims 1 and 10, the optical housing 141 in Shirakawa does not have an opening in one of its "sides" (not "ends") that is configured to receive the adapter 32 therethrough. Rather, the adapter 32 in Shirakawa is inserted into the optical housing 141 through an "end" of the housing. This configuration is significantly different from the recited configuration, and it does not provide the benefits described in the pending application where the guide member can be inserted into the cavity of the connector body through an opening in a "side" of the body.

For at least this reason, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 10, and dependent claims 2-9 and 11-15 are allowable over the cited prior art.

B. Claims 16-37

Independent claims 16 and 26 were rejected under §102 in light of Shirakawa. Claims 16 and 26 are both directed to fiber optic connection devices involving a connector body and a guide member. Applicants have amended claims 16 and 26 to clarify that the guide member is configured to permit a ferrule to extend beyond an end of the guide member. In particular, claim 16 recites "a guide channel body configured to be secured into a cavity of a housing having a fiber optic transceiver (FOT) device, said guide channel body being configured to permit an end of said ferrule to extend beyond an end of said guide channel body proximate said fiber optic transceiver (FOT) device." Similarly, claim 26 recites that the ferrule "is retained in said elongated guide channel of said guide member in such a position that a tip of the ferrule extends outward through and beyond said second opening of said connector body..." Permitting the ferrule to extend beyond the end of the guide member leads to various benefits over the prior art, as set forth in the application. Applicants submit that Shirakawa does not disclose a connector device where the ferrule of the fiber optic cable extends beyond the end of the guide member. Rather, Shirakawa states that "the accommodating chamber 101 is longer than the ferrule 31 so that the small-diameter portion 42 of the ferrule 31 accommodated therein does not project from the connection opening 102, whereby damage of the end face of the POF 37 is protected." (Col. 8, lines 29-34). Thus, the Shirakawa device actually touts the fact that

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the ferrule tip does not project beyond the end of the accommodating chamber 101 as a benefit in protecting the tip.

For at least this reason, independent claims 16 and 26 and dependent claims 17-25 and 27-37 are allowable over the cited prior art.

C. Claims 38-42

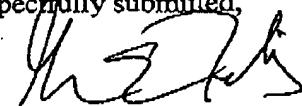
New independent claim 38 is directed to a device for coupling a ferrule having a connector body and a guide member. The guide member "is configured to maintain a tip of the ferrule extended beyond an end of said guide member..." For the reasons set forth above in connection with claims 16-37, Applicants submit that the prior art of record does not disclose this feature, and, for at least this reason, Applicants submit that claims 38-42 are allowable over the cited prior art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. Applicants believe any fee due has been addressed in an accompanying transmittal. If any additional fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. 65783-0032 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: August 18, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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